

[10191/2294]

METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR TRANSMITTING INFORMATIONAL CONTENT DATA

[Background Information]

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a method and a system for transmitting informational content data to a plurality of terminals.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

It is believed that information [Information] is increasingly provided in a multimedia manner in the form of text, image, speech, music, video, etc. by information providers. With the aid of the page description language HTML, information prepared in a multimedia manner [is] may be provided on the world-wide Internet (WWW world wide web) as linked multimedia documents. The individual pages or documents of the provider are typically transmitted point to point, i.e., from the information provider directly to the terminal. To obtain information interesting to him/her, the user of a terminal, e.g., of a computer or a mobile telephone, [must] may establish the connection to the information provider and request the desired information. If, for example, a user residing in the region of Munich would like to receive traffic reports about the Munich area, he/she must request this information from the information provider by establishing a connection to the information provider [via] by a telecommunications network. After establishing a transmission channel to the information provider and the terminal of the user, the desired information is then transmitted to the terminal, e.g., a mobile telephone, as informational content data.

It [is] may be difficult and time-consuming for the user of the terminal to establish the connection to the information provider. Moreover, the connection is established and the

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informational content data is transmitted at the request of the user of the terminal, [i.e.,] often at times when it [is particularly] may be costly to transmit informational content data.

[A] It is believed that a further disadvantage is that the user of the terminal [is] may not be interested in all of the information provided by the information provider, but only in information relevant to him/her. To obtain the information relevant to him/her, the user of the terminal [must] may select the information provided by the information provider. This selection or choice [is] may also be complicated and time-consuming for the user of the terminal.

[Summary of the Invention]

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[The method of] It is believed that an exemplary method and exemplary system according to the present invention for transmitting informational content data [having] have the [features of Claim 1 as well as the system for transmitting the informational content data having the features of Claim 13 have the particular] advantage that the user of the terminal receives the information relevant to him/her in a simple and convenient manner.

Furthermore, the information relevant to the user of the terminal may be transmitted to him/her in a [particularly] cost-effective manner.

[The idea underlying the present invention is to]Relevant information may be automatically [provide] provided to the user of the terminal [with relevant information via] by a central information transmission station, without the user of the terminal having to request the information from the information provider.

[The dependent claims include advantageous further refinements and improvements of the method] According to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention [recited in Claim 1 and of the information transmission system of the present invention
5 recited in Claim 13.

According to a preferred further refinement], the transmitted informational data block is tested in the terminal [via] by an informational data description block for its relevance for the
10 terminal.

In another [preferred further refinement] exemplary embodiment according to the present invention, the relevant informational data transmission block is stored in an intermediate memory of
15 the terminal and [is able to be called up there] may be retrieved for the user.

According to [an additional preferred further refinement] yet another exemplary embodiment of the present invention, the
20 informational data description block receives informational data values regarding the geographic region of validity, the valid time interval, the data format, the coding type, as well as the manner and type of transmitted informational content data.

[This] It is believed that this provides the [special] advantage that the informational data blocks transmitted to the user of the terminal [are able to] may be filtered according to different criteria.
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In another [preferred further refinement] exemplary embodiment according to the present invention, the informational content data and the informational description data from the information providers are loaded by the central transmission
35 station as a function of a request signal transmitted from the central transmission station to the information provider.

According to [an additional preferred further refinement] yet another exemplary embodiment of the present invention, the informational content data and the informational description data from the information provider are automatically loaded by the central transmission station at regular, adjustable intervals.

In [an additional preferred further refinement] still another exemplary embodiment according to the present invention, the informational data blocks are automatically transmitted from the information transmission station to the plurality of terminals at regular, adjustable intervals.

According to [another preferred further refinement] yet another exemplary embodiment of the present invention, the informational data blocks are simultaneously transmitted from the information transmission station to a plurality of terminals [via] by a distributor network.

Another [preferred further refinement] exemplary embodiment according to the present invention provides for the informational data blocks to be transmitted from the information transmission station to the terminals in an encrypted manner.

[This] It is believed that this has the advantage that third parties [are able to] may access the transmitted content data in a desired manner.

According to [an additional preferred further refinement] yet another exemplary embodiment of the present invention, the informational data description blocks transmitted from the transmission station to the terminals include encryption description data indicating the type of encryption of the transmitted informational data blocks.

[This] It is believed that this has the advantage that the user of the terminal is able to request the corresponding decryption program from the information provider.

5 According to [another preferred further refinement] still another exemplary embodiment of the present invention, the decryption data for decrypting the informational data blocks is transmitted by the information provider in response to a request at the provider's terminal.

10 According to [another preferred further refinement] yet another exemplary embodiment of the present invention, the informational content data and the informational description data from the information provider are loaded by the central
15 information transmission station [via] by a first transmission network, and the informational data blocks are transmitted by the central information transmission station to the terminals [via] by a second transmission network.

20 According to [another preferred further refinement] still another exemplary embodiment of the present invention, the informational data blocks are transmitted [via] by a radio communications network to a plurality of mobile terminals.

25 [This] It is believed that this provides the advantage that the terminals [do not] need [to] not be permanently networked in an expensive manner to the central information transmission station.

[Brief Description of the Drawings]

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[Exemplary embodiments of the present invention are represented in the drawings and are explained in detail in the following description.

The figures show:

Figure 1 shows]

Figure 1 is a schematic representation [for] explaining the transmission system of the invention for transmitting informational content data to a plurality of terminals[;].

Figure 2 [shows] is a flow chart of [the] an exemplary method [of] according to the present invention for transmitting informational content data to a plurality of terminals [according to the present invention;].

Figure 3 [shows] is a flow chart of a terminal's receiving operation of the transmitted data in accordance with an exemplary embodiment of the present invention.

[Description of the Exemplary Embodiments]

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Figure 1 shows a schematic representation of the information transmission system of the invention for transmitting informational content data from information providers to terminals [via] by a central information transmission station.

Two information provider stations 1, 2 are [shown in the example] shown in Figure 1. The information provider stations are connected [via] by connection leads 3, 4 to a first transmission network 5. A central information transmission station 7 is connected [via] by a connection lead 6 to first transmission network 5. Central information transmission station 7 is connected [via] by a connection lead 8 to a

second transmission network 9. A plurality of terminals 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 are connected [via] by leads 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 to second transmission network 9.

5 Both transmission networks 5, 9 may be any transmission network for transmitting data, second transmission network 9 [preferably being] may be, for example, a radio communications network for transmitting data to mobile terminals 15-19.

10 In [a preferred specific] an exemplary embodiment according to the present invention, the first transmission network is a fixed network, [e.g.] such as, for example, the Internet.

15 Information for the user of terminals 15-19 is stored in information provider stations 1, 2 in internal storage devices or databases. The first information provider may be a provider of informational traffic data, for example. The second information provider [provides] may provide nationwide train schedules, for example. The number of information providers, and, thus, the number of information provider stations
20 connected to first transmission network 5 may be as high as desired. The informational data stored in the storage devices of the information provider are loaded by central information transmission station 7 into an internal memory of the information transmission station. The information [is] may be loaded into the internal memory of central information transmission station 7 [either] as a function of a request signal transmitted over transmission network 5 or at regular intervals by information provider stations 1, 2. Second
25 transmission network 9 [preferably renders possible] may permit the simultaneous transmission of information to a plurality of terminals 15-19, [e.g. via] for example, by broadcast channels. In [a preferred specific] another exemplary embodiment according to the present invention,
30 second transmission network 9 is a cellular network. In this [preferred specific] exemplary embodiment, terminals 15-19
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[are] may be mobile radio communication stations or mobile telephones.

Figure 2 [shows] is a flow chart of [the] an exemplary method
5 [of] according to the present invention for transmitting informational content data to a plurality of terminals 15-19.

In a step S1, informational content data and informational description data are made available in a memory of at least
10 one information provider station 1, 2.

In a step S2, the informational content data, e.g.. the informational traffic data or the schedule data, as well as the informational description data are loaded into a memory of
15 central information transmission station 7. The informational description data is provided by the information providers and indicates which information is involved.

For example, the informational description data [indicates]
20 may indicate that the information pertains to schedule data for the German Federal Railway's summer or winter schedule.

In a step S3, informational data blocks based on the loaded informational content data and informational data description
25 blocks based on the loaded informational description data are generated by a calculation device of central information transmission station 7.

In a step S4, the particular informational content data block
30 and the corresponding informational data description block are linked together to a data transmission block by the calculation device of central information transmission station 7.

In a step S5, information transmission station 7 transmits the linked data transmission block [via] by second transmission network 9 to the plurality of terminals 15-19.

5 In [a preferred specific embodiment of the method of] an exemplary method according to the present invention, the informational content data and the informational description data are loaded by central information transmission station 7 in step S2 as a function of a request signal transmitted by
10 central transmission station 7 [via] by first transmission network 5 to information provider station 2. Alternatively, information provider stations 1, 2 load the informational content data and the informational description data automatically and at regular, settable intervals in step S2.

15 The data transmission block transmitted in step S5 by central information transmission station 7 to devices 15-19 includes an informational data description block. This informational data description block [has] may have a plurality of
20 informational data records indicating the geographic region of validity, the temporal validity or the valid time period, the data format, the manner in which the data is encoded, and the type of transmitted informational content data. The transmitted geographic region of validity indicates in which
25 geographic region the transmitted information is valid or relevant. In [a preferred further refinement] another exemplary embodiment according to the present invention, the data record indicating the geographic region of validity has a hierarchical structure, i.e., the transmitted informational
30 content data is declared valid, e.g., on a nation-wide, city-wide, or cell-wide basis. The geographic regions of validity indicated in the informational data records may also overlap. Several geographic regions of validity may be indicated for the transmitted informational content data.

The informational data description block indicates the type of transmitted informational content data, i.e., whether it is a traffic announcement, city information, etc., and the type of transmitted informational content data, i.e., whether it is text data, video data, voice data, or audio data.

Figure 3 [shows] is a flow chart [for explaining] depicting the reception of transmitted data blocks by terminals 15-19.

In a step S6, the relevance or the validity of the transmitted informational data block or content data block is tested by the particular terminal 15-19 using the transmitted informational data description block. For example, terminal 15-19 checks whether the transmitted information is valid with respect to time. If the terminal detects that the transmitted data block is valid, it is stored in an intermediate memory of the terminal in a step S7.

In a step S8, the user of the terminal [calls up] retrieves the informational content data blocks stored in the intermediate memory [in order] to use them. In an [alternative specific] another exemplary embodiment according to the present invention, the transmitted data blocks trigger events or processes in terminals 15-19. For example, content data or documents [are] may be shown on a display of terminal 15-19 daily at a certain time without the user of the terminal having to [call up] retrieve the transmitted informational content data block. The user of the terminal [is preferably able to] may set the time as well as the type of the document to be displayed [via] by a keyboard of terminal 15-19.

Data blocks stored temporarily [are preferably] may be automatically deleted from the intermediate memories of terminals 15-19 when they lose their temporal or local validity. If terminal 15-19 is a mobile telephone, for example, and is moving from a first network cell to a second

network cell, those informational content data blocks that are only relevant for the first network cell [are] may be deleted.

The data blocks transmitted by central transmission station 7 [via] by second transmission network 9 to terminals 15-19 [are preferably] may be transmitted in an encrypted manner. In this context, the transmitted informational data description block includes encryption description data informing the user of the terminal of the type of encryption of the transmitted data blocks. The user of the terminal [preferably receives] may receive a decryption program for decrypting the data blocks transmitted over transmission network 9 from the appropriate information provider [via] by a third transmission network.

If terminals 15-19 are mobile telephones, the decryption data of the decryption programs [is] may be transmitted to terminal 15-19 by information provider stations 1, 2 [preferably], such as, for example, as SMS messages in a device-dependent manner, i.e., as a function of the SIM card ID. The decryption data [is preferably] may be renewed at regular intervals.

With regard to the encryption, the user of the terminal [preferably sends] may send his/her SIM card to the licensing service provider. The user [receives] may receive a key from the service provider. This key together with the SIM card to which the decryption program in the terminal has direct access permits the decoding or decryption of the data provided by the service provider.

In [a preferred further refinement] another exemplary embodiment according to the present invention, central transmission station 7 constantly receives information regarding the current time as well as the regions in which mobile terminals 15-19 are currently located.

In [a further preferred specific embodiment] still another exemplary embodiment according to the present invention, events linked to specific transmitted data blocks are processed by so-called plug-ins. [The advantage of] It is believed that plug-ins [is] have the advantage that they may be precisely adjusted to the needs of the user of the terminal, thereby saving memory space and loading time.

[The] An exemplary method [of the invention and the] and an exemplary system [of the invention] for transmitting informational content data according to the present invention may have many different [possible uses. Interesting examples of application] uses. Examples of applications are providing local information, e.g., city guides, maps, hotel guides, restaurant guides, traffic information, calendar of events, sightseeing tours, bus and train schedules, movie schedules, etc.

Events may be initiated or triggered in the terminals by the transmitted data blocks. This results in additional possible uses, e.g. news, stock market ticker with current information, pop-up messages for the end of summer sale, storm warnings, reports of traffic jams on the highway, bypass recommendations, etc. The information [is] may be displayed to the user in terminals 15-19 or [is] communicated acoustically.

Central information transmission station 7 may be connected to a plurality of different information providers [via] by different transmission networks. An Internet connection results in further possible uses, e.g., references in the city guide to the web sites of different restaurants or references to taxi web sites with ordering capabilities or references to pizza delivery services. If an event is linked to the data block transmitted [via] by transmission network 9 to terminal 15-19, an application, such as, for example, an Internet browser, may be activated in terminal 15-19. The browser may

then [has] access [to] the informational content data stored
in the intermediate memory of terminal 15-19.